

### **III**

#### **The Suharwardi Shrines: Shaikh Hamza Makhdum and Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi**

The Suharwardi order<sup>1</sup> is the earliest Sufi *silsilah* that was introduced in Kashmir in the early fourteenth century by Saiyid Sharafuddin Suharwardi. I have already referred to his *Khanqah* and given reasons for its not becoming a centre of pilgrimage in Kashmir. In fact, it was the *Khanqah* of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum that became an important centre of pilgrimage for the Kashmiris during the medieval times and continues to be a Suharwardi shrine of central importance in contemporary Kashmir. Before I seek to examine the historical reasons for the centrality of the shrine of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum, it is necessary to throw light on the revival of the Suharwardi order in Kashmir long after the death of Bulbul Shah.

Until the reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70), the Suharwardi order seems to have made no impact on Kashmiri society, barring the conversion of Rinchana and his tribe to Islam. As already noted, the *Khanqah* of Bulbul Shah seems to have lost its importance following the death of Bulbul Shah. The political instability and court intrigues in Kashmir after the death of Rinchana also did not allow Bulbul Shah's *Khanqah* to develop as an important pilgrimage centre. Added to this is the fact that Bulbul Shah does not seem to have made any contact with the commoners. On the contrary, Shaikh Hamza

Makhdum<sup>2</sup> established a very wide base at the societal level<sup>3</sup> and thus made a major contribution to the popularity of the Suharwardi order in Kashmir.

## REVIVAL

After the demise of Bulbul Shah in 727 A.H./1326 A.D., the popularity of Suharwardi order was on the wane. And it was after a really long time, in one of the regnal years of Sultan Zainuddin Abidin, that a Suharwardi Sufi named Saiyid Muhammad Isfahani graced Kashmir by his presence.<sup>4</sup> This Sufi preferred seclusion and lived apart from society. But this way he made such a reputation for himself that scores of people thronged his doorstep. Not the one to get deterred in his solo spiritual mission, Saiyid Isfahani moved to a village called Khanpur and became increasingly reclusive.<sup>5</sup>

The next Suharwardi Sufi to follow was Saiyid Ahmad Kirmani. He arrived in Kashmir during the rule of Sultan Nazuk Shah (1529-1530 & 1540-1552). The Sultan erected a *Khanqah* for him at Narwuer in Srinagar. He also allotted a yearly allowance from the state income to cater to the needs of the public kitchen set up by Saiyid Kirmani.

Saiyid Ahmad Kirmani's sepulchre lies near the tomb of Shaikh Bahauddin in Srinagar. Among his famed disciples may particularly be mentioned Baba Masud, popular in Kashmir by the name of Narwuer Saheb.

Another Suharwardi Sufi of eminence whose adherents were sequentially foreordained to thrive in Kashmir for a long time was Saiyid Jamaluddin Bukhari. While in Kashmir, he domiciled at the *Khanqah* of Malik Ahmad Yattu.<sup>6</sup> Though the Sufi's sojourn in the Valley lasted for six months only, the Suharwardi order enjoyed almost unparalleled success in Kashmir. Shaikh Hamza Makhdum, the illustrious disciple of Jamaluddin Bukhari made it possible. This peerless Suharwardi Sufi's estimable involvement helped the order expand its geographical and social base.

## HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE SHRINE OF SHAIKH HAMZA MAKHDUM

### **HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE SHRINE OF SHAIKH HAMZA MAKHDUM**

The shrine of the Shaikh Hamza Makhdum reigns almost supreme. Although several scholarly works contain useful information about Shaikh Hamza Makhdum's life and role in the history of Sufism in Kashmir, no attempt has so far been made to study the historical importance of the shrine in forging close ties between Srinagar and the rural areas. Shaikh Hamza Makhdum was essentially a Sufi with a village background.<sup>7</sup> But he settled in Srinagar with the definiteness of a purpose. His mission was not simply to popularize the teachings of the Suharwardi order but it was to internalize the teachings of the rural based indigenous order of the Rishis too. In this way he widened the scope of the Suharwardi order in the Valley. He gave due respect to the beliefs of the Rishis, in spite of his ability to enroll some of the Rishis like Shankar Rishi, Rupi Rishi and Hardi Rishi as his disciples. He himself used to visit the shrine of Shaikh Nuruddin Rishi and even advised Mulla Ali Raina to undertake the pilgrimage to this shrine before enrolling him as his disciple. There is ample evidence in the source material to show that Shaikh Hamza Makhdum visited various villages with a spiritual mission and hence acquired fame as a spiritual leader par excellence.

The historical importance of the *Khanqah* of Hamza Makhdum essentially lies in its being a great centre of Sufi learning in the sixteenth century. Shaikh Hamza Makhdum had a great number of disciples in Srinagar and the villages. But his fame rests on the hagiographical works penned by his prominent disciples and *khulafa*. Among these, Baba Dawud Khaki may particularly be mentioned. In his *Dastur-us-Salikin*, Dawud Khaki furnishes important information about the sources and organization of the *Khanqah* life in Srinagar.

During the time of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum, several *Khanqahs* existed in Srinagar. His own spiritual guide Saiyid Jamaluddin Bukhari was stationed at the *Khanqah* of Shaikh Ahmad Yattu in Srinagar. When Shaikh Hamza Makhdum visited his *Khanqah*, the *murshid* served him meat and bread received as *futuh*.<sup>8</sup> Various individuals financially supported the *Khanqah* of Shaikh Isma'il Kubrawi, where Shaikh Hamza had received education. We are told that Shaikh Hamza's father had kept the entire amount of ushr (1/10<sup>th</sup> of his property) for the maintenance of the *Khanqah* of Shaikh Isma'il Kubrawi.<sup>9</sup> Other visitors to the *Khanqah* offered *futuh* that added to the

resources of the *Khanqah*. In the same way the *Khanqah* of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum emerged as an important centre of Sufi learning during his own lifetime. Behind such a development was the spiritual personality of Shaikh Hamza himself who set in vogue certain literary traditions in the *Khanqah* itself. Thus his *Khanqah* had not only an *imam* who led the prayers but arrangements were made outside the *Khanqah* for imparting lessons on the Qur'an, the *Hadith*, jurisprudence and Sufism. While Shaikh Hamza himself used to impart education to the Sufis, several theologians and scholars visited his *Khanqah* for gaining spiritual bliss.

Moreover, the rulers and the ruling elite used to visit the *Khanqah* of Shaikh Hamza. His *Khanqah* seems to have become a refuge for the poor during his lifetime. Other visitors to the *Khanqah* were a host of people from various sections of the Kashmiri society who sought the Shaikh's advice on their spiritual and worldly problems.

It has been alleged by a modern historian that Shaikh Hamza Makhdum's shrine is situated on the ruins of a Hindu temple. R. K. Parmu writes that the temple-site of Bhimaswami-Ganesa "was converted into the *ziyarat* of the great saint Makhdum Shaikh Hamza."<sup>10</sup> This is not corroborated by the facts of history. M. A. Stein writes about the different location of this ancient temple in these words: "Ganesa (Vinayaka) is worshipped to this day under the name of Bhimasvami-ganesa in a rock lying at the foot of the southern extremity of the Harparvat (Sarikaparvata) close to the Bachdarwaza of Akbar's fortress. Under the thick layer of red daub with which the stone is covered by the worshippers, its supposed resemblance to the head of the elephant-faced god cannot now be traced, nor whether the face is turned west or east. Sriv. 111.207, mentions the erection under Zain-ul-Abidin of a shrine in honour of Bhimasvami-ganesa. The rock image of the latter is referred to also by Sahibram in the Tirtha. *In its immediate vicinity lies the ziyarat of Muqaddam Sahib (Makhdum), one of the most popular Muhammadan pilgrimage-places of the Valley* (italics mine)."<sup>11</sup>

It is thus clear that both Hindus and Muslims have appropriated parts of the Hariparbat hillock for their shrines.<sup>12</sup> R. K. Parmu has concocted his own story about the conversion of temple into a *ziyarat*. Had the present site of the *ziyarat*

been a temple, Shaikh Hamza Makhdum's disciple, Saiyid Mir Khan, would not have meditated there for a long time. Or, had he really converted the temple into a place of worship, Baba Dawud Khaki would have certainly informed the readers about the incident. On the other hand, Khaki does not fail to tell us about his *murshid's* missionary role in several villages inhabited by the people with animistic beliefs. Thus he got felled a thick poplar (tree) worshipped by the Hindus at the village of Nadihal in Kuihama. As a result of the Shaikh's missionary role, the people of this village embraced Islam en bloc. Shaikh Hamza laid the foundation of a mosque in this village in 972 / 1564. Likewise, Dawud Khaki refers to several other mosques founded by Shaikh Hamza in some villages against the background of the animistic beliefs and other un-Islamic practices of the villagers.<sup>13</sup>

The place that was chosen for meditation by Saiyid Mir Khan,<sup>14</sup> one of the disciples and prominent *khulafa* of Shaikh Hamza, is also said to have been the favourite abode of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum. Mulla Ali Raina is keen to impress upon his readers the spiritual importance of this place. He relates his own spiritual experience and that of his *murshid* in order to highlight its importance as an abode of bliss. This sacred place was turned into the tomb of Shaikh Hamza after his death.

During his lifetime, Shaikh Hamza Makhdum frequented the inviolable spot at the southwest belt of Koh-i-Maran (Hari Parbat). He usually spent forty consecutive days (*chilla*) in seclusion and divine meditation there. Actually, Saiyid Mir Khan, who had a flair for masonry, had chosen this site for himself to be his burial place after death. Accordingly, he started working on it. But whatever he constructed would be found in a shambles the very next day. So, Mir Khan, in a state of confusion, performed the *istikhara*<sup>15</sup> and had a déjà vu that this particular place, at an appropriate time, was to be utilized by his *murshid*, Shaikh Hamza. Mir Khan then met him and told the tale. With his *murshid's* approval, he once again resumed work on the future graveside, now for his *murshid*, and was successful this time.<sup>16</sup>

In fact, it was Saiyid Jamaluddin Bukhari, the preceptor of Shaikh Hamza, who for the first time chose the southwest declivity of Koh-i-Maran hill as his place for contemplation. Hence in 748 A. H. /1347 A.D, a small area of the hillock was

smashed and some sort of raised surface for worshipping purpose was made. When Shaikh Hamza left Tujjar for Srinagar, he selected the same spot for meditation. He asked Saiyid Khan to make a small dwelling for worship at the place. Hence a portion of the hill was once again leveled and the Zakir Mosque came into being. When Shaikh Hamza passed away, he was laid to rest on the left side of this mosque.

### THE SITE OF PILGRIMAGE

The shrine of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum is counted among the six exalted places (*shash buq'a 'aliya*) of Kashmir; the rest being the Hazratbal *Dargah*, the *Khanqah-i-Mualla*, the shrines of 'Alamdār-i-Kashmir, Dastagir Saheb and Hazrat Naqshband Mushkilkusha. The shrine complex of Sultan-ul-Arifin Shaikh Hamza occupies the southwest belt of Koh-i-Maran hill <sup>17</sup> just below the fortress.<sup>18</sup> To reach there one has to walk through the gates of Naagar Nagar fort\_ Bachi Darwaza and Kathi Darwaza on the west and southeast ends respectively. Two sweeping staircases at either ends lead to the shrine complex. The shrine is situated amidst picturesque surroundings. On the northeast is the Nagin Lake. One can have a view of the famous Dal Lake from the premises of the shrine. On the southwest is situated the traditional part of the Srinagar presenting a spectacular scene.

The site of pilgrimage is an object of adoring regard. It spreads over a vast area. The shrine expanses include the mausoleum of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum, <sup>19</sup> the Zakir Mosque, the Salar Beig Mosque, the Inayat Khan Mosque, the Haft Sadat Mosque, a tank, the Maryam Mahal (ladies compartment), a grotto and an inn. Besides, an open-air hermitage can be located near a place called Kasturi Pind situated in the eastern part of shrine complex.<sup>20</sup>

### Mausoleum

The tomb of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum was raised by Emperor Akbar in 999 A. H. / 1590 A. D., fifteen years after the Shaikh's death.<sup>21</sup> It was a single storey structure. Its roof had a likeness to the Rishi style pyramidal steeple. An ornamental

arched wall was raised on all sides of the tomb. The ceiling was beautified by *Khatamband*.

The gravestones of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum and Baba Dawud Khaki on the northern side are surrounded by lattice work windows. Satin worked with gold has been spread out on them. The tombs are hemmed in by a marble enclosure.<sup>22</sup> The enclosure has been studded with glass so that the devotees can obtain a sight of its interior housing the tombs. Its ceiling is bedecked with flowers made out of papier mache. The walls inside the mausoleum have been paneled in carved walnut wood that tapers into a beautiful roof-like structure. The exterior of the mausoleum and the enclosure is embellished with wooden lattice work windows.<sup>23</sup> A number of coloured lanterns beautify the place. The mausoleum has a four tiered roof with a gilded finial at its apex.

### The Shrine Complex

It was Saiyid Mir Khan who constructed the wall of the shrine compound towering to a height of 45 feet.

In 1125 A. H. / 1713 A.D., Nawab Inayatullah Khan, the Mughal governor of Kashmir, got built several porticoes on the western, southern, and eastern side of the wall formerly raised by Saiyid Mir Khan.

In 1237 A. H. / 1821 A. D., the Afghan governor Ata Muhammad Khan<sup>24</sup> spent a lot of money on the renovation of the shrine.

Shaikh Ghulam Mohiuddin, a governor during the Sikh regime, not only enlarged and repaired the structure but also got constructed concrete long flight of steps ascending to the shrine from Bachi Darwaza.

It is not merely the rulers of Kashmir but also some affluent families of the Valley who have contributed their mite to the construction work related to the shrine from time to time. Among these may be mentioned Khwaja Ghulam Mohiuddin Gandru, who in 1289 A. H. / 1872 A. D.,<sup>25</sup> spent a lot of money on the construction work. He also got built a hamam.

Khwaja Muhammad Sakhi Drabu, another wealthy person, got installed the silver plated pinnacle capping its tower.

In recent times, Khwaja Khanyari spent an enormous amount on the construction of the flight of steps leading to the shrine on either way\_ Kathi Darwaza and Bachi Darwaza.

The construction work is still going on in the *Khanqah* and a huge amount is being spent on the adornment of the ceiling of the main portico of the shrine with *Khatamband*.

In 1363 A. H. / 1943 A. D., the Intizamia Committee was founded to take stock of the matters appertaining to the shrine of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum. It undertook renovation work on a large scale. The stairs on the western side were made using devar stones. By 1365 A. H. / 1945 A. D., the mausoleum and the mosques were roofed with tin. The tomb was beautified by fixing exquisite walnut wood lattice boards and the ceiling by papier mache work.<sup>26</sup> The courtyard was covered by polished divar stones. The rows for offering *namaz* were demarcated by strips of white marble. In addition, a gate was fixed on the eastern end.<sup>27</sup>

### Zakir Mosque

The Zakir Mosque built by Saiyid Mir Khan is extant.<sup>28</sup> There are four closets attached to the mosque where people even now sit up for *itikaf*.<sup>29</sup> It has an arched roof. Its walls are plastered with green slaked lime. A small door leads inside. There are two small windows on right and left sides. The mosque has a low vaulted ceiling. Its date of construction is 972 A.H. / 1564 A.D. It was made spacious in 954 A.H. / 1547 A.D.

### Salar Beig Mosque

To the east of the mausoleum, on a slightly higher elevation, stands the Salar Beig Mosque.<sup>30</sup> At its southern end is an engraved antechamber whose design and lattice work is similar to that of Chashmashahi's upper one. Salar Beig, the governor deputed by Mughal Emperor Jahangir, got the mosque constructed in 1015 A.H. / 1606 A.D. It was purely made of wood.<sup>31</sup> In 1375 A.H. / 1955 A.D., the Intizamia Committee took an initiative to rebuild the mosque right from its base.<sup>32</sup> Its size was enlarged. A major portion of the Koh-i-Maran was blown up using explosive and the ground leveled. The mosque was walled



off. Modern-style doors and windows were fixed. On its southern side, the Salar Beig Mosque has a balcony with beautiful twisted iron fencing. While standing on it, one can have a bird's eye view of the Srinagar city.

#### Inayat Khan Mosque

In 1124 A. H. / 1712 A. D., governor Inayat Khan constructed another mosque after his own name. Ata Muhammad Khan, the Afghan governor, enlarged it.

#### Haft Sadat Mosque

Some ancestor of Shaikh Ahmad Tarabali <sup>33</sup> built this mosque. The following *haft sadat* or the seven descendents of Muhammad (SAW) are interred in its confines: Saiyid Jalal, Saiyid Baqir, Saiyid Husain, Saiyid Ahmad, Saiyid Jafar, Saiyid Ibrahim and Saiyid Muhammad. By 1369 A. H. / 1949 A. D. reconstruction work on the mosque was completed.

#### Water Reservoir

Prince Dara Shikoh is said to have constructed the water reservoir that, while approaching the shrine from Kathi Darwaza, can be spotted on the right side. In olden days, people used to fill it with fresh water year after year. So great has been the devotion of Kashmiris towards this shrine that until the mid twentieth century, people from both villages and towns would often throng this shrine during long spells of drought, floods etc. To seek mercy and forgiveness, the loyal devotees of Makhdum Saheb would carry pitcher-pots and leather bags with clear water on their shoulders and while reciting the kalima marched in a procession towards the shrine. And in this manner re-filled the tank with water. Their firm belief was that Allah, through the medium of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum, pardoned their sins and freed them from unexpected calamities.<sup>34</sup>

## Maryam Mahal

Ladies have been allotted a separate space for offering prayers. As part of the restoration work, the embankment on its southern side was remade.<sup>35</sup> The area of this enclosure was increased. A special feature of this enclosure is its arched windows. A ladies chamber was also constructed. The steepness of the area lends beauty to Maryam Mahal.

The shrine of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum with its huge complex managed by the Waqf Board holds an important position in the religious and social life of large majority of Kashmiri Muslims. While the shrine's importance is basically connected with the life, thought and role of Shaikh Hamza, one cannot overlook the fact that over the years both the rulers and the ruled have added to the popularity of the shrine by showing great veneration to the unsurpassed Suharwardi Sufi of Kashmir.

## RELIGIOUS DEVOTION AT THE SHRINE

The shrine of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum, being perched on a hillock, is fairly visible from different places in Srinagar. I have often seen Kashmiris facing the shrine with folded hands in a standing position at various places in Srinagar. One can see certain individuals on some of the bridges spanning the river Jehlum in a state of extreme devotion. While talking to some traditional women as well as modern educated persons regarding their daily practice of reciting the *fatiha* and invoking the help of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum in their everyday affairs, I was told by the devotees that they could not think of starting their day without seeking the blessings of the Shaikh. All such devotees have firm faith in the efficacy of the shrine. They are under the fostering care of this Sufi. Sultan as they call Shaikh Hamza Makhdum also helps them in their daily endeavours. It does not matter if in certain cases their prayers go unanswered. But as they believe that there may be something good for their future life in the hidden bountiful store of Allah. So the spiritual intertwining between the Sultan and his devotee continues

unabated. At no stage does the devotee allow any doubt to enter his mind. Since the devotee believes that he is a devotee of the Sultan only, he is not a skeptic. In fact, there is no scope for skepticism, as they maintain, in Sufism. For them surrender to Allah, that is Islam, is not enough. One has to surrender oneself to one's *pir* in all respects. In a state of surrender alone, one may hope to receive spiritual as well as material benefits.

Seen from the above perspective, it is not difficult to understand why the shrine of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum continues to be visited by hundreds of men and women every day, especially on Thursdays and Mondays. Such pilgrims come to the shrine from various quarters of Srinagar and every nook and corner of the Kashmir Valley. Some of the devotees knot strings around the trellis of the shrine. Taking advantage of a devotees' desperation, some *mujawirs* promise to pray to Allah on the former's behalf but only in exchange for a few rupees. These *mujawirs* have reasons enough to demand money on several trivial pretexts.<sup>36</sup>

Kashmiri Muslims are excessively devoted to Shaikh Hamza Makhdum and his personality. In addition to the devotees discussed above, there are some individuals who visit the shrine on particular days for gaining spiritual bliss only. They do not visit the shrine with any mundane purpose. They undertake the visit to the shrine under the guidance of their *murshid*. While it is difficult to identify such rare men, it was a satisfying experience for me to talk to at least two persons. For certain reasons they kept their identity concealed. Nonetheless, it is through such individuals that certain Sufi traditions set in vogue by Shaikh Hamza Makhdum continue to be practiced. I may particularly refer to the *chilla*, the forty days retreat from the worldly activities. During my research I could not come across any such individual who practiced *chilla* of the kind under reference. However, during the month of Ramadan, I found a certain distinctiveness characterizing the shrine of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum. Several pious individuals of high spiritual calibre are stationed at the shrine and spend the entire month in deep meditation. In particular, the Zakir mosque at the shrine wears a serene and calm look. It is important to note here that Shaikh Hamza laid a great deal of emphasis on *zikr*. He himself used to spend a good deal of time in deep

meditation in this mosque. Hence the mosque is known as Zakir Masjid.

In this mosque one may find several individuals performing *'itikaf* during the last ten days of Ramadan. It has now become customary for certain individual devotees to first offer *nafl* <sup>37</sup> prayers at this mosque before approaching the tomb of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum for *fatiha* and other benedictions. Although the *chilla* has become a rare practice at the shrine, some individuals may be seen contemplating for hours or a day or two at this mosque under the guidance of their spiritual preceptors.

### PILGRIM'S PATH

For scores of Sultan-ul-Arifin's devotees, his shrine is that sheltered spot where they seek refuge whenever low-spirited. The calm ambience gives them strength to take on life's challenges.

Shamima Azad, a notable singer of the Valley, in a song penned and sung by her echoes the sentiment of many a Kashmiri:

*Khasav Sultan sinz heyrey*  
We will climb the stairs of the Sultan  
*Muda sarnie tathey neyrey*  
Our prayers will be answered therein

Climbing the stairs leading to the Sultan has cured many a soul. Interview with several devotees served as an eye-opener.

A woman, whose son had a narrow escape when he got hit by a vehicle, was seen sweeping the stairs with a large broom. "As I got cleaning the stairs of Sultan, my son started taking a few steps on the road to recovery," sighed the mother.

Another woman had this to say about her infant son who injured one of his legs: "He could barely walk. But he got cured the moment he set foot on the first step leading to the Sultan."

A Kashmiri Pandit woman had come to express gratitude. Her daughter could not conceive even after twenty years of marriage. So she made a vow to ascend the steep stairs up the shrine of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum every Monday and Thursday

till the Sultan granted her heart's desire. She tied a strand around the wooden screens surrounding the tomb enclosure (the practice is called *desh gandin* in Kashmiri). Eventually, her daughter was blessed with a girl.

Another Kashmiri Pandit father of a job-seeker took a pledge to climb the stairs leading to Shaikh Hamza Makhdum's tomb till his son found a satisfying job. His wishes were fulfilled the very next day. He, too, had come to express gratitude. "Yesterday I was asking for Makhdum Saheb's intervention with a heavy heart and just today my son received an appointment letter. Indeed, a miracle has happened," he remarked ecstatically.

The place is replete with such anecdotes. Furthermore, many businessmen revealed having reached amazing heights by paying homage and feeding the poor on their way to the shrine complex.

Whenever a person is in trouble, she or he is advised to climb the flight of steps leading to the shrine of Makhdum Saheb. Interestingly, not long ago, children while playing a local game *tuley langun* (played by two) would lift each another on their backs and sing:

*Tuley langun tulan ches  
Makhdum Sahebun pakan ches*

In one of the bridal songs (*wanwun*), the young blushing bride is put in the Sultan's care:

*Havalai Hazrat Sultanas*

## YOUTH PARTICIPATION

At the shrine precincts, one comes across different people. A closer look and one may see among the devotees many young men and women. Their noticeable presence disproves the myth that younger generation is indifferent to spirituality.

Nowadays a large number of people are readily foregoing their weekend fun in favour of a spiritual journey to the shrine. It seems as if they are seeking spirituality like never before. "It is a means of understanding ourselves and the state we are in

and the chaos around us” is their take on their weekly visits to the shrine. Visiting the tomb of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum Kashmiri, offering prayers in congregation and feeding the destitute on the way makes them feel good.

The researcher questioned three young highly educated women on their visits. For them journey to the shrine was not only a mode of reassuring their faith in the Suharwardi Sufi but also a way of unwinding. It gave them the kind of satisfaction that no other this worldly pleasure could offer. They got closer to their faith. They claimed becoming more confident persons.

Even the men in their early 20s don't lag behind. "I love outings with my friends, but if it clashes with my proposed visits, I don't think twice about letting go of the fun," remarked an enthusiastic young devotee.

A majority of these devotees come off affluent families where organization of *Khatmat* gatherings on the occasion of 'urs, *Milad*, *M'iraj* or any other event has become a customary routine. This practice has also prompted many among them to throng the shrines. Their contention is that holding of such assemblages at home made them aware of their distinct Kashmiri identity. Moreover, some have been inspired by their parent's devotional visits. According to them, listening to *n'at*, *zikr* and spiritual discourses on the life of a Sufi serves as an eye opener. Anecdotes of the exemplary life of a Sufi act as a guide and provide a key to the numerous problems they might be involved in. The didactic message being conveyed either in Kashmiri or Urdu is easily understood and assimilated. For these people it is also a way of drawing lessons.

In today's times young people are finding it difficult to cope with life. They are confronted with peer pressure. Many among those questioned had gone through broken marriages. Added to this are the acts of violence. So being one amongst the shrine's serene ambience gives them solace. They flock to the shrines to seek peace.

### THE'URS CELEBRATIONS

While devotees visit the shrine of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum throughout the year, the chief occasion for the pilgrimage is his death anniversary, a festival known as 'urs.

The exact figures of attendance at the 'urs are not available, though according to a rough estimate about 35,000-40,000 people visit the shrine on this occasion. The 'urs falls 24<sup>th</sup> Safar. The first day of 'urs is exclusively meant for men and the second one for women. In fact, it is the Waqf Board that, in order to avoid rush, makes an appeal to the women to visit the shrine on the second day. However, the appeal, whenever made, is seldom heeded neither in this shrine and nor elsewhere. Both men and women are present in droves on both the days. But the number of women present on the second day of 'urs is much more than those present on the first one.

One of the marked characteristics of the 'urs celebrations in Kashmir has been the number of days specified for the purpose. Thus the 'urs celebrations at the shrine of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum continue for 13 days as compared to 12 at the *Dargah* of Hazratbal and 11 at the shrine of Dastagir Sahib.

All the local papers carry a circular issued by the Waqf Board regarding the schedule of programmes about the shrine concerned. The programme usually appertains to the organization of religious assemblies at the shrine on the appointed times preceding and following the prescribed prayers.

An important feature of the 'urs celebrations is the organization of religious assemblies for a whole night preceding the main day of the 'urs. The number of devotees who participate in such an assembly and remain awake the whole night is quite large. The participants include both men and women. These assemblages, known as *shab*<sup>1</sup> in Persian and Kashmiri, are marked by the performance of nawafil and recital of invocatory prayers, *durud*, *n'at*,<sup>38</sup> and *manqabat*.<sup>39</sup> The *khatib* of the mosque or some religious scholar, invited especially for the purpose, delivers a sermon for several hours. The sermon usually highlights the contribution of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum to the spread of Islam in Kashmir. The *manqabat* are recited by *manqabat khwans* in praise of the Shaikh. His glorious deeds are often eulogized. This is how a close spiritual, emotional and historical bond between the shrine and the Kashmiris has been maintained for centuries through the organization of rituals with a distinct local flavour.

So strong has been the impact of such gatherings on the Kashmiris that despite the emergence of modern religious

reform movements, the entire shrine complex remains filled with capacity during the *shab*.

The most common mode of seeking the blessings of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum is through the loud recital of a *khatam-i-sharif* in a group. The mode of recitation is a peculiar chanting in praise of Allah, the Prophet (SAW), and Shaikh Hamza. The common belief is that the Shaikh holds a spiritual *darbar* (court) on special occasions at the shrine. Hence such occasions also provide an opportunity to the devotees to submit their petitions in what is believed to be the court of the King of Gnostics (Sultanu'l-'Arifin) or, more commonly, the *Darbar-i-Sultani* (Sultan's court).

It is not merely at the shrine of Shaikh Hamza that spiritual courts are believed to be held on special occasions, but such a belief is maintained at other shrines too. But there is something different about the shrine of Shaikh Hamza. There is a popular belief among the devotees that most matters ranging from domestic affairs to politics of the Kashmir Valley are decided in the court of Shaikh Hamza. It might sound strange, yet true, that the Shaikh appeared in a vision to some Kashmiris at the time of tribal invasion (October 1947). Some spiritual experiences related by certain Kashmiris to their friends during the post-Partition period, though belonging to what Henry Corbin calls the "phenomenological truth"<sup>40</sup> are, nevertheless, without any historical content. One such experience was narrated to the researcher's grandfather Khwaja Ghulam Ahmad Khan<sup>b</sup> by Ghulam Ahmad Darel, a prominent businessman of Nowhatta in Srinagar, who had a vision of Shaikh Hamza in his dream. The Sufi is said to have told his devotee that he would drive the tribal invaders out of his homeland.

Similar other stories are still current among various families in Srinagar. It is outside the domain of history to solely rely on spiritual experiences as an authentic historical source. Nonetheless, persistence of a strong belief that Shaikh Hamza was spiritually instrumental in driving the tribal invaders out of Kashmir points to the revitalization of the identity consciousness of the Kashmiris. This was in tune with the ideology of the National Conference leadership of the pre-1947 era. My object is not to doubt the authenticity of spiritual experiences of this sort since one cannot rule out the possibility



of the impact of the crisis that Kashmiris went through during the post-Partition period. Therefore it is vital to explore the psychology of the participants in the social drama of Kashmir who were both devotees of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum and political activists. It appears that they were preoccupied with the idea of saving Kashmir. Hence, through constant petitioning in the court of Shaikh Hamza, they seem, at least in their spiritual and historical consciousness, to have made the Sufi intervene in the political affairs of Kashmir. The Shaikh's spiritual intervention may appear to be preposterous on sound historical reasons. But as a student of social history, I cannot ignore completely the subliminal impact of historical (tribal invasion) and spiritual forces (the Shaikh's supposed political interference) on the Kashmiri mind. This also explains why the shrine of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum, like the *Dargah* of Hazratbal, became a strong bastion of the National Conference after 1947. Mrs. Indira Gandhi is said to have visited the shrine quite often.

#### SCHEDULE OF THE 'URS PROGRAMME

As already mentioned, the annual 'urs at the shrine of Mahbub-ul-'Alam Shaikh Hamza Makhdum is celebrated with traditional gaiety on 24<sup>th</sup> Safar. An elaborate programme mentioning the religious activities connected with the 'urs is compiled. The administrator of the shrine notifies it for the information of the populace at large. The publishing division of the shrine advertises the programme in the local dailies. Alongside, the prescribed prayers' timings on the days of 'urs celebrations are also released.

#### 23<sup>rd</sup> SAFAR\_ THE PRECEDING EVE

The 23<sup>rd</sup> of Safar, the day preceding 'urs, is the *shab-i-awwal* or the first night. On this eve, benedictions are pronounced, the names and attributes of Almighty Allah are repeated orally, *durud*, *n'at*, *munajat* etc. are also read. The gathering is enlivened by the soulful and collective rendition of the prayers by the devotees. The religious meetings are convened after offering of the *maghrib* prayer in congregation. Later, after the 'isha prayer, vigil is observed with prayers and

recitation of some verses of the Qur'an selected exclusively for the purpose. Scores of devotees gather to participate in the night long recitals.

The number of devotees is large especially after the *maghrib* prayer. They convene to participate in the shab-i-awwal ceremony that takes place immediately after the offering of the '*isha* prayer in congregation. The detailed programme of the '*urs* celebrations makes a mention of the '*isha* and the *maghrib* prayers' timing on this day. Accordingly, the first religious gathering is held after the *maghrib* prayer and lasts till the '*isha* prayer. The number of devotees goes on increasing as a special religious meeting is organized once the congregational '*isha* prayer is offered. It is called *mehfil-i-Awrad-i-Fathiya*. Several thousands of devotees assemble and recite the *Awrad-i-Fathiya* in chorus. When the recitation is complete, the recitals rendered before the commencement of the '*isha* prayer is resumed. This time the recitals continue till the *fajr* prayers (24<sup>th</sup> Safar) and include verses of the Qur'an, *durud*, *n'at*, *munajat* etc. Thus the devotees both men and women of all ages keep themselves awake on the first eve of this solemn ceremony and enliven their souls.

#### 24<sup>TH</sup> SAFAR\_ THE FIRST DAY OF '*URS*

The auspicious day of 24<sup>th</sup> Safar is celebrated as the first day of '*urs*. The timings of *fajr*, *zuhr*, '*asr*, *maghrib* and '*isha* prayers falling on this day are notified through the local press. The idea is to ensure maximum participation of the people in the congregational prayers.

#### 25<sup>TH</sup> SAFAR\_ THE FINALE

The concluding ceremony takes place the next day, the 25<sup>th</sup> of Safar. The day is observed as the second day of '*urs*. It is exclusively reserved for women devotees, though the shrine sees almost equal participation of men and women on both the days. Nevertheless, elaborate arrangements are made for women pilgrims so that no inconvenience is caused.

An appeal is made to all the pilgrims to stay calm. This message is reiterated through local dailies.

The event is highly organized. Assistance of the departments of Electricity, Water Works, Transport, Municipality etc. is sought to carry out the proposed ceremonial 'urs programme effectively. Arrangement is made for the plying of additional buses on all the routes leading to the shrine of the renowned Suharwardi Sufi Shaikh Hamza Makhdum Kashmiri.<sup>41</sup>

### THE SHRINE OF BABA NASIBUDDIN GHAZI

The shrine of Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi is situated in Bijbehara.<sup>42</sup> This shrine has been chosen for study because of its unrivalled importance as the second major Suharwardi shrine in the Valley. Baba Dawud Khaki, of course, is entombed in Srinagar. But as compared to the shrine of Baba Nasibuddin, his tomb does not have any representative character. This phenomenon may be explained in terms of his popularity as the most distinguished scholar and *khalifa* of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum. In fact, Baba Dawud Khaki is more remembered through his works. Another reason why Baba Dawud Khaki's tomb could not become a great centre of pilgrimage is the fact that he lies buried near the tomb of his preceptor Shaikh Hamza Makhdum at the Hariparbat hillock in Srinagar. Remarkably, Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi was a disciple and *khalifa* of Baba Dawud Khaki.

### LIFE AND TEACHINGS

Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi was born in 977A.H. / 1569 A.D. at Sialkot.<sup>43</sup> He was the son of Mir Hasan Razi. Baba Nasib was undoubtedly a great Sufi of the Suharwardi order in Kashmir. He was always engrossed in deep meditation and constantly wore a musing expression. In several respects, he played a unique role in the socio-religious life of the Kashmiris.

Baba Nasib got constructed many mosques and toilets in various districts and villages. He provided meals to the indigent. His affection for the mankind, as manifested in his benevolence, earned him the title *Abul Fuqara* or father of the destitute.

In addition to launching a crusade for providing viable social services, he also embarked on a literary mission. He penned fourteen books. Among these, *Zaruri Khurd* is very popular.<sup>44</sup> Matters relating to jurisprudence are expounded in it. Another work titled *Nurnama* is a pioneering treatise on the Rishis. Occurrences in the lives of Shaikh Nuruddin Rishi and his *khulafa* are documented in it.

## SAYINGS

The sayings<sup>45</sup> of Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi are as follows:

1) Baba Nasib said that the grave depreciates the breadth of life. If a wealthy person acquires information about the absolute certainty of death, he will forget all his worldly possessions. And if a poor man is made aware of the reality of death, he will cease to remember his own self.

2) Whoever perceives the Divine, thoughts about one's wife and children obliterate.

3) A self-obsessed person is accompanied by Satan. A person beside oneself with divine love is escorted by the Supreme Being. Humility is preferable to conceit.

4) A moment's realization of the purpose of Creation is better than a thousand year's worship. A person acquainted with the Truth is worthier than thousands of abstainers. Baba Nasib likened such ascetics as sustained themselves only on a frugal diet of wild herbs, leaves and grass to donkeys and cows. Alternatively, men who gorged on delicious food were denounced as belonging to the category of wild animals like wolves and leopards. Here, Baba Nasib adopts this style of utterance as a metaphor for affluent man's obliviousness to poverty.

5) Discernment of the Divine, according to Baba Nasib, is thus beyond the reach of exploiters of the weak. To live for the welfare of the needy is a virtue and a key to the realization of Truth. This ultimate Truth cannot be traded. The cognition of the Supreme Being cannot be traded and neither are pomp and riches of any help in the recognition of Truth.

Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi played a significant role in the social and religious history of Kashmir. His methods of disseminating knowledge about Islam were novel. It can be

safely assumed that in several respects he excelled his contemporaries in widening the purpose and scope of Islamic knowledge in the Valley. His major contribution was to motivate the agriculturists and the lower sections of Kashmiri society to bring their social behaviour in consonance with the teachings of Islam. He engaged a band of *bhands* (folk musicians). He went from village to village. Keeping in view the popularity of folk dancers among the villagers, his ingenious method of inviting the folk to his assemblage through the beating of drums often produced the desired results. The story did not end there. Wherever Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi stationed himself for a few days, provision was made for feeding the needy through a mobile *langar* (public kitchen). Significantly, about 300 to 400 disciples accompanied Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi during his missionary transit throughout the length and breadth of Kashmir.

For these reasons Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi is remembered in several villages of Kashmir as a Sufi philanthropist. Wherever he went, he found a mosque and a bathroom. Even now there is no dearth of villages in Kashmir where a mosque is not named after him. Although he belonged to the Suharwardi order, he seems to have lived like a Rishi. He did not take meat and remained a vegetarian, notwithstanding the fact that several cows were slaughtered at his *langar* daily for feeding the poor. In several respects, Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi seems to have been greatly influenced by the teachings of Shaikh Nuruddin Rishi. So great was the influence of the mystic poetry of Shaikh Nuruddin on his mind that he often fell unconscious under its spell. There is every likelihood that during his discourses, he used Shaikh Nuruddin's poetry as vehicle for propagating the teachings of Islam in Kashmir.

It follows that the Suharwardi order, as it developed in Kashmir represented the regional ethos. In this process Islam arose in Kashmir as a religion of love as well as a social force. This is also illustrated by Baba Nasibuddin's attitude towards the non-Muslims. A notable trait of Baba Nasibuddin's social demeanour was his excessively tolerant attitude towards the non-Muslims. Despite his rigorous adherence to the precepts of the *Shari'ah*, he visited the cremating grounds of the Hindus and offered prayers to the departed souls. This strange practice became a matter of great concern among his associates. And

when questioned about the same, his reply was in these words: "Whatever I behold is beyond your view. Many souls of such persons as outwardly died Hindus appear to me as those of believers. And some of them even say (to me): 'Your blessings mitigate our afflictions.' So, I never shirk from this beneficent act." <sup>46</sup>

From the above anecdote, one can sense the seminal impact of the teachings of Baba Nasibuddin on the folk. In fact, the religious environment in which Baba Nasibuddin played the missionary role was conducive to developing the mutual respect of the adherents of Islam and Hinduism for each other's religion. However, Islam being the dominant civilization was able to make its presence felt in all walks of the traditional Kashmiri society, thanks to the missionaries like Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi who had consecrated their life to popularizing the teachings of Islam at the societal level. This is obvious by the fact that the Brahmans of Kashmir neither played a creative role in response to the equalitarian teachings of Islam nor could they counter such surging ideas as an opposition group. Quite to the contrary, the Brahmans gave a tacit recognition to the spiritual authority of the Sufi and the shrines that evolved through periods of Islamic acculturation.

Nothing explains this development in more objective terms than the silence of the Brahmans regarding some questions of critical importance related to their history and beliefs. Here it is important to focus on the ambience created by the folk themselves around the shrine of Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi. One may notice a grave in the close vicinity of the shrine. This is the alleged tomb of Lal Ded, revered by a small number of traditional Muslim women. No Persian chronicler or hagiographer, including even Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi has referred to it. Had it really been a tomb of Lal Ded, it would have become a popular centre of pilgrimage considering her representative character as a strong advocate of the underprivileged against the Brahmanic supremacy. There is no historical evidence to support the belief regarding the authenticity of the tomb of Lal Ded and still, surprisingly, such a myth got perpetuated around the shrine of Baba Nasibuddin. Noteworthy, the myth did not find a wide acceptance among the Muslims.

During the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries the Valley of Kashmir experienced conversion to Islam in social rather than in mere religious terms.<sup>47</sup> Thus the Kashmiri Muslim culture and the Pandit culture that evolved during centuries of interaction was the product of their social environments. This is the reason that the Kashmiri Pandits living in Bijbehara and around never raised any questions about the supposed tomb of Lal Ded despite the attempts by some Kashmiri Pandit scholars to resurrect her as the exponent of Kashmiri Saivism.<sup>48</sup> Another reason that can be given for Kashmiri Pandit and Muslim writer's omitting mention of the tomb of Lal Ded is the cherished belief that she was above the formalities of either Hinduism or Islam. The basic idea about Lal Ded in Kashmir is that of a wandering woman saint saturated with divine love who would make no distinction between Hindus and Muslims on the grounds of religion. The point is that the Kashmiri Pandit culture and the Kashmiri Muslim culture, as it evolved over centuries, assumed varied dimensions essentially within the framework of Brahmanism and Islam respectively thereby comprising the Kashmiri culture. Therefore the 'urs ceremonies connected with the shrine of Baba Nasibuddin are reminiscent of the distinctiveness characterizing Islam in Kashmir.

### THE 'URS CELEBRATIONS

No shrine studied within the purview of my thesis offers such a complex array of facts to a researcher engaged in fieldwork as the shrine of Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi. Here Islam and culture coalesce rather conflict. On the one hand, the devotees at the shrine show strict adherence to the *Shari'ah* by way of their participation in congregational prayers offered at *zuhr* on the eve of 'urs. On the other, they watch the performances of the *bhands*<sup>49</sup> after *zuhr* prayer until the *muezzin* calls the faithful to the 'asr prayer.<sup>50</sup> The interlude between *zuhr* and 'asr is the period which takes a reflective observer deep into the least studied facts of history. Although Muhammad Ishaq Khan has studied this phenomenon in the context of Kashmir's transition to Islam, nevertheless, we need to elaborate upon the points raised by him in relation to the social importance of the shrine of Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi. It

must be pointed that Baba Nasibuddin's major contribution in terms of social history was to win the so-called low caste communities to Islam. It is a fact that a majority of such communities had already been assimilated in Islam. But he was the only Sufi who recognized the importance of their role in developing special and close connections between Islam and the folk. We have already stated how he utilized their services for propagating the teachings of Islam among the folk. More importantly, even after his death the folk dancers sought to preserve the historical legacy through their conspicuous presence at several shrines of the Valley. The performance of the *dambael* at the shrine of Baba Nasibuddin raises certain important questions of both religious and social significance.

In the first place, one may ask how the Suharwardi order in Kashmir gave sanction to the folk practice of *dambael* considering the emphasis of the adherents of this order on following the *Shari'ah*. It is certain that Baba Nasibuddin was able to draw the common people to his sermons through the services of folk dancers. However, after his death the folk dancers did not fail to reiterate their indebtedness to Baba Nasibuddin for bringing them within the fold of Islam. This socially significant fact is still reflected in the performances of the folk dancers. During my conversation with them I found them to be deeply historically and socially conscious persons. They do not strictly follow the *Shari'ah* while observing the ordained five times prayers regularly. Yet they are grateful to Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi for raising their status, though in their own estimation. The very fact that they have been able to give performances on the anniversary of Baba Nasibuddin for over centuries, gives them inner peace and contentment. They relate with some measure of pride their humble contribution to spreading the message of Islam in terms of love, brotherhood, and reconciliation. On very sound historical reasons, they regard themselves as the pilgrims of love who, not long ago, were able to attract the rural folk irrespective of the religious and caste affiliations. As Muhammad Ishaq Khan observes "their performances have a symbolic significance for assessing the role of the Rishis in drawing the peasants and farmers to their fold. But, more importantly, the conspicuous presence of the folk dancers on the eve of anniversaries and the villagers age-long interest in them imply that it was a social rather than



mere religious conversion that created the pressures for change which, in turn, also affected the course of Islamic religious development in the Valley. The issues raised by the folk dancers through their acts concern the relation of the individual believer to God, and equally important, contract between the ordinary believer and the saint, who is in direct contact with the God. It was through such contacts that the use of the Kashmiri language as a religious vehicle was fostered and the Islam opened up to people who were not educated. The overall impact of the Rishi Movement was that through the performances given by bands, dambel maets, etc. Islam was brought to the masses in a meaningful way. Since at that time the only education for the illiterate folk was that which is transmitted orally, there arose groups of acrobats and singers who assumed the role of teachers. Thus it is not difficult to understand why the festive occasions at the shrines of the Rishi saints are days of rejoicing and thanksgiving. They commemorate the formative stage of conversion when the commoners entered the fold that proclaimed the equality of all men." <sup>51</sup>

### THE SHRINE COMPLEX

The shrine of Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi is situated in Bab, one of the wards of Bijbehara. This Suharwardi Sufi is entombed on the northern side of Jama Masjid.

The *Khanqah* is double storied. The stony square block on which it is raised is 5 feet high. The area of the *Khanqah* is 45 feet x 40 feet wide. Its ground floor is mainly composed of carved and polished stones. The *Khanqah* is equipped with a pyramidal steeple. In olden times, it was roofed with birch bark. In 1985, the Auqaf replaced it with concrete tin. Its structure has three protrusions\_ one on the north, the other one on the south, and another one on the east. Remnants of lattice woodwork are visible on north south projections.

The protrusion at the front has a porch. In the ground floor, four embellished columns made up of deodar hold up a beautiful ceiling. One can find an old well and an attached bathroom on the front side of the *Khanqah*. Now a hand pump has also been installed.

There is a graveyard in the vicinity of the *Khanqah*. One of the famous poets of Kashmiri language, Abdul Ahad Nazim, is interred there\_ on the right side of the *Khanqah's* entrance.

#### GENERAL REMARKS

My empirical study of the two major Suharwardi shrines of the Valley points to their significant role not only in the gradual dissemination of the teachings of Islam in a particular regional setting, but more importantly, in giving a distinctive local identity to Islam in Kashmir. This distinctiveness in respect of utilizing the services of the *bhands* and *dambael maets* by a *Shari'ah*-conscious Sufi like Baba Nasib strengthened the links of the rural folk with his shrine on firm historical rather than mere religious grounds. As a result, the folk traditions like *dambael* became an essential part of the 'urs celebrations at the shrine of Baba Nasib. During the early phase of turmoil in the Valley the 'urs of Baba Nasib was restricted to the intonation of *khatmat* and offerings of prayers in congregation. The point is that life and rituals at the shrine of Baba Nasib are not just related to Islam alone, but to the folks' phenomenon of experiencing or understanding Islam in social terms. Such a phenomenon is thus characterized by a meaningful interaction between religion and history. This historical fact cannot be described as an end in itself but a continuous process in which a convert seeks to understand his religious experience not so much in theological as in historical terms. It is thus outside the domain of a student of history to argue whether the age-old beliefs cherished by the folk about the sanctity of the ritual of *dambael* are Islamic or un-Islamic. What is important to a student of history is the mammoth assemblage of the devotees of the shrines.

#### FOOTNOTES:

- 1) The founder of Suharwardi order is Shaikh Ziauddin Abul Suharwardi (1167). He authored *Aadab-ul-Muridin*. But the credit for popularizing the

Suharwardi order goes to his nephew and successor, Shaikh Shihabuddin Abu Hafs Umar bin Abdullah (1144-1234). An illustrious writer, his well-known work is *Awarif-ul- Ma'arif*. The Sufi doctrines in India are based upon widely known and extensively read works like *Kashf-ul-Mahjub* by Al Hujwiri, and Shaikh Shihabuddin's *Awarif-ul-Ma'arif* is second such work.

In India, Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariya (1182-1262), a native, of Khurasan founded the Suharwardi order.

- 2) Very well known in Kashmir as Mahbub-ul-Alam or beloved of the universe, Shaikh Hamza Makhdum was born in the year 900 A.H. / 1494 A.D. His place of birth is Tujjar. His father Usman Raina patronized learning and supported the seminary of Shaikh Ismail Kubrawi at Srinagar. Shaikh Hamza received his early education at this seminary. Shaikh Fathullah, the son of Shaikh Ismail, personally imparted lessons to him for a year. Shaikh Hamza learnt the Qur'an and its commentary under the guidance of Maulana Darwesh of the same institution. At Madrasat-ul-Dar-us-Shifa, the academy founded by Sultan Hasan Shah, his instructor was Maulana Lutfullah. There he studied books on jurisprudence and some works of Saiyid Ali Hamadani. Abdul Qaiyum Rafiqi, *Sufism in Kashmir from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century*, Bhartiya Publishing House, pp.20, 21.
- 3) There is enough information in the Persian sources about the visits of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum to several villages. While sometimes he remained the guest of his disciples, on other occasions he found time to enjoy the beauties of nature in the company of his disciples. He did not simply popularize the Suharwardi order by way of enrolling disciples but also made his presence felt in the rural society as a Sufi preacher of high calibre.
- 4) He was the disciple of Saiyid Jalaluddin Bukhari of Uch, popularly known as Makhdum Jahaniyan (1308-84).
- 5) Khanpur can be found in the Baramulla district of Kashmir.
- 6) M. A. Yattu was the vizier of Sultan Hasan Shah (1472-84).
- 7) Tujjar lies on the north of Sopore. It is situated at a distance of 67 km from Srinagar city. Walter Lawrence, the erstwhile Settlement Commissioner of Jammu and Kashmir State in 1890s, writes that Makhdum Sahib's companions laughed at his preaching and his prophecies, and insisted on his taking his share in the corvee of the village. So he left Tujjar and cursed his people that they should want water not only for their crops but also for their drink. The curse came true, for Tujjar and Zainagir are dry to this day. Walter R. Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir*, 1967, Srinagar: Kesar Publishers, p.289.
- 8) Unsolicited grant. *Dastur-us-Salikin*, folio, 54b.

- 9) Ibid., f. 36b.
- 10) R. K. Parmu, *A history of Muslim rule in Kashmir: 1320-1819*, 1969, People's Publishing House, p. 434.
- 11) Pandit Kalhana, *Rajatarangini: a chronicle of the kings of Kashmir*, vol. 1, translated by M. A. Stein, 1979 (reprint edition), Motilal Banarsidass, third book 352, p. 103.
- 12) Ram Chandra Kak, *Ancient monuments of Kashmir*, 1971 (reprint edition), p. 88.
- 13) *Dastur.*, f. 241.
- 14) Mir Saiyid Ahmad Khan had crossed Hindustan and reached Kashmir. He decided to stay in the Valley.
- 15) A prayer for good things, blessings.
- 16) Shaikh Baba Muhammad Ali Raina, *Tadhkirat-ul-'Arifin*, f.360. Khwaja Ishaq Qari, *Chilchihat-ul-'Arifin*, f. 106.
- 17) At the foot of the hill lies the ward of Makhdum Handu. Dara Shikoh Mosque and the Dara palace can be seen just below the shrine premises. Muhammad Yusuf Teng (ed.), *Keiashur Encyclopaedia* (in Kashmiri), vol. 1, 1989, Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, p. 213.
- 18) Atta Muhammad Khan Barakzai built the fort situated on the top of this hillock.
- 19) Besides, Baba Dawud Khaki, Saiyid Mir Khan, Shaikh Ghulam Mohiuddin, Saiyid Manik Shah, *haft sadat* or the seven descendents of the Prophet (SAW), Khwaja Ziauddin, Saiyid Muhammad Daulat, Saiyid Muhammad Aalim, Saiyid Muhammad Aazam, Saiyid Muhammad Aadil, Shaikh Hasan Lalu, Mir Muhammad Pampori, Baba Maqsud Makhdumi, Baba Muhammad Nizam, Baba Abdullah Makhdumi, Baba Ayatullah, Shah Rahmatullah Sani and Mir Inayatullah are also entombed in the shrine precincts.
- 20) The devotees pray at the open-air hermitage, especially, in scorching summer months.
- 21) In 1006 A.H. /1597 A.D., Akbar started building the Naagar Nagar wall. At the same time orders were given for the construction of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum's mausoleum.
- 22) To the east of the enclosure lies the gravestone of the governor Ghulam Mohiuddin.

- 23) Each lattice work window bears a design different from the rest.
- 24) Atta Muhammad Khan issued coins in the names of Shaikh Nuruddin Rishi and Shaikh Hamza Makhdum.
- 25) In the same year work on Abbas Beig Mosque got completed. This mosque too can be found within the confines of the pilgrimage centre.
- 26) While the shrine complex was being renovated, the centuries old remnants of its former glory were wiped out. They didn't fancy preserving the rich architectural heritage. The original doors and windows of the mausoleum and the Salar Beig Mosque were reshaped to fit in the new architectural plan. Several architectural remains of the Mughal and the Afghan period were replaced with shapeless objects. Teng (ed.), op. cit., p. 219.
- 27) The gate has been named Bab-ul-Sultan.
- 28) Saiyid Manik Shah put in a lot of labours on construction of the Zakir Mosque.
- 29) Seeking retirement in a mosque during the last ten days of the fast of Ramadhan. During the said period the worshipper does not leave the place. The time is spent in reciting the Quran and in performing *zikr*.
- 30) Within the shrine premises, the Salar Beig Mosque holds significance after the mausoleum. Teng (ed.), op. cit., p. 218.
- 31) Age had rendered the wood brittle.
- 32) The work got completed after twenty years.
- 33) A nineteenth century Sufi.
- 34) Abdul Majid Raina Makhdumi, *Tadhkira-i-aslaf yani Sultan-ul-'Arifin* (in Urdu), 1999, Srinagar: Gulshan Publishers, Shaikh Muhammad Usman and Sons, p. 256. The author laments that the present generation of Kashmir has forgotten this practice.
- 35) This was done in accordance with the latest scientific developments.
- 36) As a kid, the researcher who had come with her mother, was once wandering around the shrine of Makhdum Saheb when a *mujawir* gave her a *shirni* which she ate thinking it to be a *tabbaruk*. But to her surprise, he held out his hand gesturing that money be given to him. Her mother who was at short distance away noticed and came to her rescue. The point is that it is not only the helpless that are

fleeced but also sometimes even kids are not spared. Thankfully such *mujawirs* are in a minority.

- 37) "A voluntary act". A term applied to such acts of devotion as are not enjoined by the teaching of Muhammad (SAW), or by his example.
- 38) A descriptive epithet or phrase, eulogium, encomium (especially of the Prophet (SAW)).
- 39) Anything in which a man glories or which confers on him pre-eminence; praise specially of the Prophet (SAW) and his (SAW) companions.
- 40) M. Ishaq Khan, *Kashmir's transition to Islam: the role of Muslim Rishis*, 2002 (paperback edition), New Delhi: Manohar, p. 207.
- 41) The shrine of Makhdum Saheb witnesses celebrations on the 'urs of Baba Dawud Khaki, though on a much smaller scale. This 'urs falls on 3<sup>rd</sup> Safar.
- 42) An ancient town of considerable importance built on both banks of the river Jehlum between Islamabad and Srinagar, from which places it is distant by road about 6 and 30 miles, respectively. Baron Hugel states that Bijbehara was one of the ancient capitals of Kashmir; the name may perhaps be derived from Vijaya Para, the City of Victory, or from Vijaya Bijiri, a king who is believed to have reigned in this neighbourhood about 67 B.C.  
There are two *ziarats* in Bijbehara. Of these, the shrine of Baba Nasibuddin Ghazi is the largest and most famous. It is situated towards the north end of the town.  
Quarter Master General in India in the Intelligence Branch (compiler), *Gazetter of Kashmir and Ladakh*, 1992 (reprint edition), Delhi: Manas Publications, pp. 226-228.
- 43) Teng (ed.), op. cit., vol. 2, p. 49.
- 44) Ibid., p. 50.
- 45) Hasan Pir Ghulam, *Asrar-ul-Akhyar*, Urdu translation entitled *Tadhkira-i-Auliya-i-Kashmir*, 1960, Kashmir: Kohinoor Press, pp. 210, 211.
- 46) Ibid., p. 210.
- 47) M. Ishaq Khan, op. cit.
- 48) B. N. Parimoo, *The ascent of self: a re-interpretation of the mystical poetry of Lalla-Ded*, 1978, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

- 49)'This religious exercise is known as *Dumali* or *Zikr*. It serves the same purpose as the dance of the Darwesh. The mind is thrown into a whirl, and the dancers fall into religious ecstasy.' Walter Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir*, 1967 (reprint edition), Srinagar: Kesar Publications, f. n., p. 289.
- 50)Before the onset of turmoil in the Valley, on the last night of the five days '*urs*' celebrations, the *bhand* would randomly choose an adolescent amongst them. He was supposedly sanctified and so attired in all the finery just like a groom. He was the *maeili maharaz* or the fair's groom. At 2:00 a.m. sharp he would march in a procession towards a place called Padshahi Bagh. People crowded him and often longed to touch him. By the time he was back at the shrine (the place where he had started his journey), his clothes would be in tatters. He was expected to return before the *fajr* prayer. The origin of this bizarre practice could not be traced.
- 51)M. Ishaq Khan, op. cit., pp. 195, 196.